

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 10, 12-15 and 17-27 are pending in the present application. Claims 10, 12-15 and 17-22 have been amended, and Claims 23-27 have been added by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) was objected to; the drawings were objected to; the abstract was objected to; Claims 14 and 19 were objected to; Claims 10, 12-15 and 17-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; Claims 10, 12, 14, 15, 17 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Kurihara et al; Claims 20 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Kurihara et al; Claims 13 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kurihara et al in view of Finch et al; and Claim 22 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Kurihara et al in view of Finch et al.

Applicant thanks the examiner for the courtesy of an interview extended to Applicant's representative on May 1, 2002. During the interview, the differences between the present invention and the applied art were discussed. No agreement was reached pending the Examiner's further review when a response is filed. Arguments presented during the interview are reiterated below.

Regarding the objection to the IDS, enclosed is an IDS including the publications discussed in the Background of the Invention. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested the objection to the IDS be withdrawn.

Further, regarding the objection to the drawings, it is noted that the features objected thereto are no longer in the claims (note the previous amendment had amended the claims to

overcome this objection). Note Fig. 1 is being amended to show a separating member 30 (the specification has also been amended to reflect this change).

In addition, regarding the objection to the abstract, a new abstract has been added which is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this objection be withdrawn.

Further, Claims 14 and 19 have been amended to depend on Claims 10 and 15, respectively. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested the objection to Claims 14 and 19 be withdrawn.

In addition, regarding the rejection of Claims 10, 12-15 and 17-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, the appropriate claims have been amended in light of the comments noted in the outstanding Office Action and as shown in the marked-up copy. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 10, 12, 14, 15, 17 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Kurihara et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention as recited in Claim 10 is directed to a component support assembly to be mounted in a vehicle door including a rigid double-shell box structure having a first wall facing an interior of the vehicle and a second wall facing an exterior of the vehicle. The second wall has at least first and second hollows separated by a separating member such that the rigid double-shell box structure independently supports a plurality of vehicle door components fixedly attached to the first wall of the rigid double-shell box structure thereby forming an enclosed volume with the first volume of the second wall. Independent Claim 15 recites similar features.

For example, as illustrated in a non-limiting example, Figure 1 shows a component support assembly to be mounted in a vehicle door 1 including a rigid double-shell box

structure (see Figure 2) including a first wall 12 facing an interior of the vehicle and a second wall 8 facing an exterior of the vehicle. Further, as illustrated in Figure 1, the second wall 8 has at least first and second hollows 9, 22 separated by separating member 30 (see the specification at page 5, lines 8-9). In addition, the rigid double-shell box structure independently supports a plurality of vehicle door components 14, 15, 16 etc., fixedly attached to the first wall 12 of the rigid double-shell box structure thereby forming an enclosed volume with the first volume 8 of the second wall 8 (as shown in Figure 2, for example).

As discussed during the interview, Kurihara et al is merely directed to a speaker box, and does not teach or suggest the claimed first and second hollows separated by a separating member. Further, Kurihara et al is merely directed to the installation of a single speaker, whereas the claimed invention is directed to a component support assembly having a rigid double-shell box structure independently supporting a plurality of vehicle door components.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted independent Claims 10 and 15 and each of the claims depending therefrom patentably define over Kurihara et al.

Claims 20 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Kurihara et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Similar arguments apply to independent Claim 20 as that discussed above with respect to Claims 10 and 15. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted independent Claim 20 and each of the claims depending therefrom are also allowable.

Claims 13 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kurihara et al in view of Finch et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 13 and 18 depend on Claims 10 and 15, respectively, which as discussed above are believed to be allowable. Further, it is respectfully submitted Finch et al also do

not teach or suggest the features recited in the independent claims. Therefore, it is respectfully requested this rejection also be withdrawn.

Claim 22 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kurihara et al in view of Finch et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 22 depends on Claim 20, which as discussed above is believed to be allowable. Further, it is respectfully submitted Finch et al also do not teach or suggest the features recited in independent Claim 20. Therefore, it is respectfully requested this rejection also be withdrawn.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE SPECIFICATION

Page 2, lines 15-24, please replace the two paragraphs as follows:

--This object is achieved according to the invention by a vehicle door [which has the characteristics set out in Claim 1.

The] including an equipment support, comprising at least one region in the form of a double-shell box structure, resistant to warping, consisting of two continuous walls which are spaced apart and parallel to the outer wall of the door, and that forms an element which is stable without the participation of an interior trim lining or other elements.--

Page 5, beginning at line 6, please replace the paragraph as follows:

--It may already be noted that the shaped piece 8 comprises two open hollows 9, 22 in the plane of separation of the two-part equipment support separated by a separating member 30, at least one of the hollows forming part of the box structure that is to be formed. The hollows consist of the bottoms of dished regions and of lateral walls. The latter run transversely to the plane of separation of the equipment support. They essentially determine its volume and thus play an important part in its mechanical strength.--

Page 5, beginning at line 19, please replace the paragraph as follows:

--It must be noted that the shaped piece 8 may also have just one hollow. In this particular instance, the recessed areas underneath the separating member 30 between the two hollows 9 and 22 can be used as a space in which to mount certain equipment items in the wet zone, but is not required in all scenarios.--

IN THE CLAIMS

--10. (Twice Amended) A component support assembly [for] to be mounted in a vehicle door, comprising:

a rigid double-shell box structure[, said rigid double-shell box structure comprising a first rigid shell structure and a second rigid shell structure,]

[said first rigid shell structure comprising a support plate configured to define an open box-like volume,]

[said second rigid shell structure comprising a support plate configured to be fixedly joined to said first rigid shell structure, such that when said first rigid shell structure and said second rigid shell structure are fixedly joined, said first rigid shell structure and said second rigid shell structure define a closed box-like volume within said rigid double-shell box structure;]
having a first wall facing an interior of the vehicle and a second wall facing an exterior of the vehicle, said second wall having at least first and second hollows separated by a separating member.

[wherein said rigid double-shell box structure is configured to fit within said vehicle door and to be fixedly attached to said vehicle door, and]

wherein said rigid double-shell box structure [is configured to provide independent structural support for] independently supports a plurality of vehicle door components fixedly attached to said first wall of the rigid double-shell box structure thereby forming an enclosed volume with the first volume of the second wall.

12. (Amended) The component support assembly of claim 10, wherein said second wall of the rigid double-shell box structure [is configured to accommodate a] is more towards an interior of the vehicle than a fully retracted curved vehicle door window, and

wherein the second wall of the rigid double-shell box structure has substantially a same shape as the fully retracted door window.

13. (Amended) The component support assembly of claim 10, wherein said rigid double-shell box structure further comprises rigid impact absorbing foam inserted into the second hollow of the second wall.

14. (Amended) The component support assembly of claim 10 [11], wherein [said second shaped rigid structural member is configured to join with said first shaped rigid member at a closed edge around a periphery of said first rigid structural member] the first wall of the rigid double-shell box structure is jointly fixed at edge portions with the second wall.

15. (Twice Amended) A vehicle door, comprising:
an outer panel configured to be mounted on a vehicle body;
a component support assembly[, mounted to the vehicle door including [comprising
]a rigid double-shell box structure[, said rigid double-shell box structure
comprising]

[a first rigid shell structure and a second rigid shell structure,]

[said first rigid shell structure comprising a support plate configured to define an
open box-like volume,]

[said second rigid shell structure comprising a support plate configured to be
fixedly joined to said first rigid shell structure, such that when said first rigid shell structure and
said second rigid shell structure are fixedly joined, said first rigid shell structure and said second
rigid shell structure define a closed box-like volume within said rigid double-shell box structure;]

[wherein said rigid double-shell box structure is configured to fit within the
perimeter of said outer panel and to be fixedly attached to said outer panel, and] having a first

wall facing an interior of the vehicle and a second wall facing an exterior of the vehicle, said second wall having at least first and second hollows separated by a separating member; and an interior lining.

wherein said rigid double-shell box structure [is configured to provide independent structural support for] independently supports a plurality of vehicle door components fixedly attached to said first wall of the rigid double-shell box structure thereby forming an enclosed volume with the first volume of the second wall[; and].

17. (Amended) The [component support assembly] door of claim 15, wherein said second wall of the rigid double-shell box structure [is configured to accommodate] is more towards an interior of the vehicle than a fully retractable curved vehicle door window, and wherein the second wall of the rigid double-shell box structure has substantially a same shape as the fully retracted door window.

18. (Amended) The [component support assembly] door of claim 15, wherein said rigid double-shell box structure further comprises rigid impact absorbing foam inserted into the second hollow of the second wall.

19. (Amended) The [component support assembly] door of claim 15 [16], wherein [said second shaped rigid structural member is configured to join with said first shaped rigid member at a closed edge around a periphery of said first rigid structural member] the first wall of the rigid double-shell box structure is jointly fixed at edge portions of the second wall.

20. (Amended) A door for a vehicle comprising:

a door structure [consisting of] including a first door wall and [of] a second door wall and lateral door walls, [wherein] said first door wall [is] being located at an exterior of said vehicle[.];

an equipment support [configured] to be [fixed] mounted to the door structure[.] ; and

an interior trim lining,

wherein the equipment support [comprises] includes at least one warp-resistant double-shell box structure[, comprising a first rigid shell structure and a second rigid shell structure,]

[said first rigid shell structure comprising a support plate configured to define an open box-like volume,]

[said second rigid shell structure comprising a support plate configured to be fixedly joined to said first rigid shell structure, such that when said first rigid shell structure and said second rigid shell structure are fixedly joined, said first rigid shell structure and said second rigid shell structure define a closed box-like volume within said double-shell box structure,] having a first wall facing an interior of the vehicle and a second wall facing an exterior of the vehicle, said second wall having at least first and second hollows separated by a separating member,

wherein [a surface of the box structure facing] said [first] second wall has substantially [the] a same curvature as a fully retracted vehicle door window, and

wherein [an inner surface of the box structure facing towards a vehicle interior includes attachment means for mounting] the double-shell box structure individually supports a plurality of devices fixedly attached to the first wall of the double-shell box structure thereby forming an enclosed volume with the first volume of the second wall of the double-shell box structure.

21. (Amended) The [component support assembly] door of claim 20, wherein said second wall of the [rigid] double-shell box structure [is configured to accommodate a] is more towards an interior of the vehicle than a fully retracted curved vehicle door window.

22. (Amended) The [component support assembly] door of claim 20, wherein said rigid double-shell box structure further comprises rigid impact absorbing foam inserted into the second hollow of the second wall of the double-shell box structure.--

IN THE ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Abstract (New).